

WYCOMBE TO WIN, SAY THE FANS!

WYCOMBE Wanderers fans, from a small 11-year-old boy to a veteran supporter in his seventies, agree on one thing — their side will beat Reading tomorrow and reach the third round of the F.A. Cup for the second time in three years.

This isn't just blind optimism of heavily committed supporters. Wanderers' performances against recent league clubs backs their claim that Wycombe are on a par with many clubs from allegedly higher leagues.

The most optimistic forecast came from the youngest of the dozen or so fans interviewed before Saturday's 2-0 victory over Southall.

Kevin Hearn, aged 11, of Spurlands Road, Great Kingshill, who has been

following the Blues for five years, says: "I think Wycombe will win 6-0. Well, Reading have lost most of their games this season, haven't they?"

Kevin even went so far as to name the scorers. His favourite player Tony 'Bodger' Horsemann would get a hat-trick while Dylan Evans 'might get one if he tries."

SINCE 1916

His view of a Wycombe victory is shared by one of their most faithful supporters, Alf Rogers from Chapel Lane, High Wycombe. He's been watching them since 1916 and reckons the scoreline will be 2-0 — he should know after all that time.

Alf says, "Wycombe are more likely to beat a big club like Reading than a small

local side. Remember the year we met Middlesbrough we only just beat Marlow 1-0 in the first round."

Alf reckons that Wycombe have got the talent but has some reservations about the state of current football. "The players don't look as though they are enjoying themselves like they used to in the old days." Incidentally Alf rates the 1922 side, which included Frank Adams, as the greatest Wycombe team.

He points to one special reason for Wycombe success tomorrow. "In John Maskell, we have two goalkeepers," he said enthusiastically.

Mr Albert Lunnion of Rutland Avenue, also thinks Wycombe's defence is their strong point. "Our best players are Mead and Phillips in the heart of the

defence. We are equal to any Division 3 side and I reckon we'll win 2-1."

HORSEMAN FANS

'Bodger' Horsemann certainly has a lot of fans down in the shed and one of his

STORY BY MICHAEL KNOX

main supporters is Ron Langston of Orchard Way, Holmer Green. He predicts a 3-1 victory with Horsemann scoring one of the goals.

Ron's still amazed at how much height Horsemann attains when he goes for a high ball. "I don't know what he puts in his boots but he's still marvellous in the air." But

Ron concedes that 'Bodger' is coming to the end of a great career. "I think this is his last season at the top, but he's done his job."

"I think Wycombe will field the same side as they did against Waterlooville and as they play 90 minute football and have a lot of character, I think they will win."

This view is shared by Michael Coster from Monks Risborough, who names two reasons for the victory. "Wycombe have good teamwork and I feel the slope is a great advantage."

FEMALE SUPPORTERS

The Blues are not short of female supporters and two of them added their voices to the choir predicting a home win. Mrs May Mole of Totteridge, who follows them to most matches, says

"They stand a really good chance and I take them to win 2-0."

Mrs Elsie Bradfield, of Orchard Road, High Wycombe says, "I know we shall win for I've got faith in my team especially in my favourite player, Tony Horsemann."

However, two of the Wycombe fans interviewed, have their doubts. Edward Messenger of Kennett Close, Terriers, says, "Wycombe ought to be able to draw up here and will probably have the edge. Then I think Reading will win the replay."

Mr Messenger never missed a home match until he was taken ill in September. Saturday was his first outing since then and he chose a chilly day for his return. "I slipped on the ice as I entered the ground," he chuckled.

Another fan expecting a draw at Loakes Park is William Keen of Rutland Avenue, High Wycombe, who has been watching them for a marathon 58 years.

"We will get at least a draw with Reading," he said, "Because we are equal to a lot of sides in Division Three and Four." But he was more enthusiastic when he added, "I think we'll win the replay 1-0."

There's one man from Wycombe who does not expect a home victory. Paul Cander of Carrington Road reckons that with Robin Friday up front Reading will win 2-0. But Paul, who has lived in Wycombe for 10 years is not being at all disloyal to his team because — of all things — he is a Reading supporter, and has been for many years!



RON LANGSTON

... Wycombe have the character to succeed



ALBERT LUNNION

... Blues defence is the strong point



KEVIN HEARN

... Horsemann hat-trick in 6-0 win



EDWARD MESSENGER

... Reading to win after a replay



MRS ELSIE BRADFIELD

... faith in the Wycombe team



ALF ROGERS

... Maskell equal to two goalkeepers



PAUL CANDER

... lives in Wycombe but supports Reading